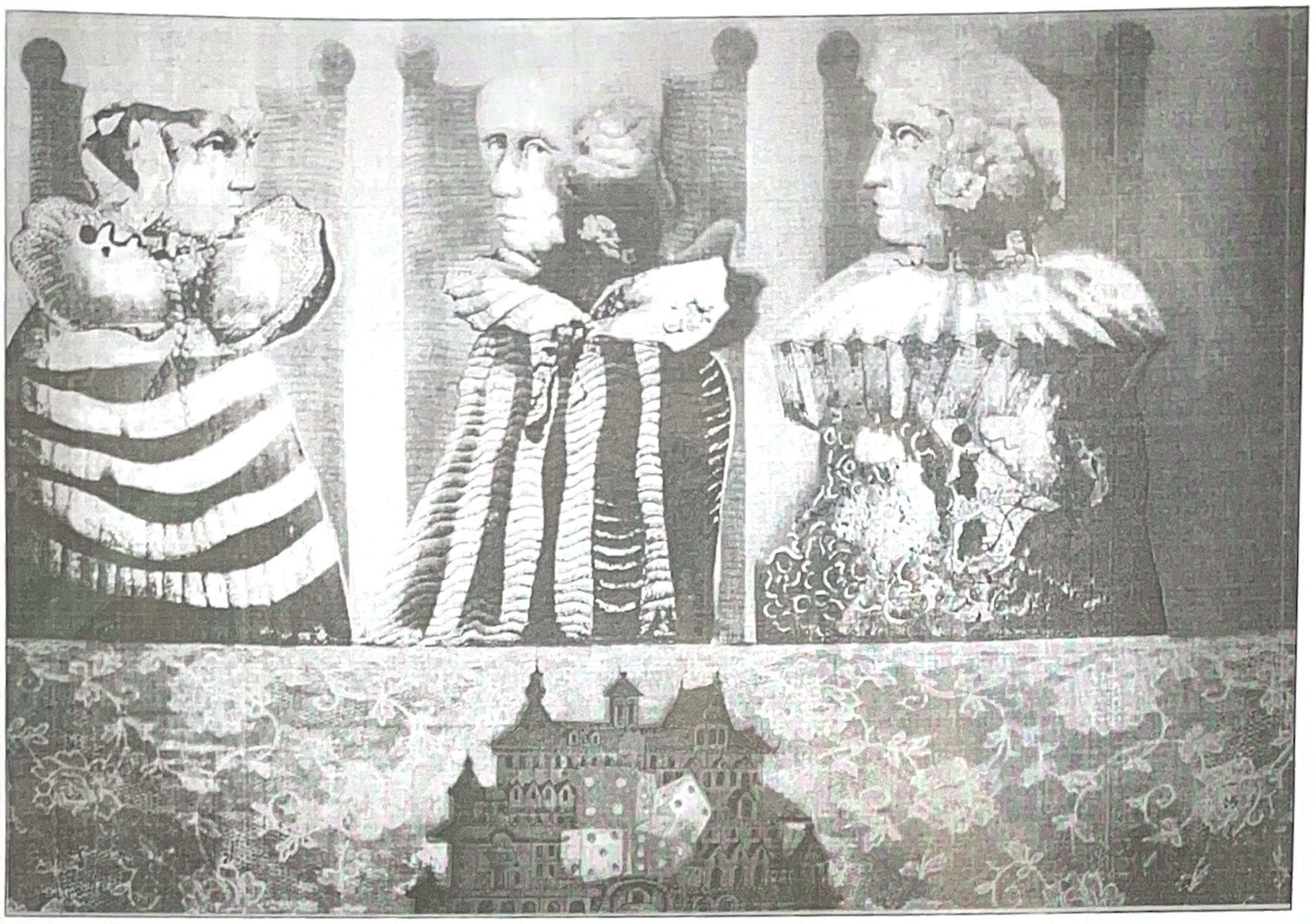
Jaroszynska Karin



Karin Jaroszynska (born 1937) **Casino**
Four-colour lithograph, 46 x 70 cm (Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein)

Pressing issues

Lithography

Lithography is a surface printing technique and does not involve cutting into a **block** or a **plate**. Lithography is thus known as a **planographic** process. The technique, invented in Germany in 1798 by Alois Senefelder, is based on the fact that oil and water do not mix. The traditional surface is a piece of Bavarian limestone, which is porous and has a fine, uniform grain. More recently, zinc or aluminium plates have been used. An image is drawn or painted on to the prepared surface with a greasy substance. This can be in the form of a pencil or crayon, or an oily liquid called **tusche**. The final print will have exactly the same qualities of wash and line as the original drawing, but it will be in reverse. The printing surface is treated to make the drawn areas receptive to the greasy printing ink, while the areas left blank repel the ink. The paper is placed on the stone or plate and the ink is transferred by the pressure of a **scraper bar**. The printing surface is often ground down until the old image no longer exists, and is then re-used.

In colour **lithography**, each colour in the image is drawn or painted on to a separate stone or plate. The preparation, inking and printing technique remain the same as that used in single colour lithography.

The development of **offset lithography** allows for the image to be printed as it exists on the printing surface, with no reversal. The ink is not transferred directly from the plate to the paper. Instead, the image is offset from the plate on to a **rubber-covered offset cylinder** and then printed on to the paper. The image is transferred in reverse on to the roller, and then again in reverse on to the paper. The two reversals cancel each other out. Exact alignment of different colours, known as correct **register**, is more reliable using this process.

Photolithography is a technique of transferring the image to the printing surface. The plate is coated with a light-sensitive emulsion and is exposed to ultraviolet light through a stencil. The image areas become hardened and receptive to greasy ink, while the rest remain receptive to water. The lithograph is then printed as in the process previously described.